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## OTTER-HUNTING.

THE gray morning light came stealing over the hill-tops, chasing back the heavy shadows that lay on their grassy slopes, as stretching ourselves and rubbing our eyes, we slouched out at the low door of the shepherd's hut. Seven long miles had we ridden up the glen the evening before, that the morning might find us by so much the nearer to the spot where we hoped to assist at the death of an otter. We had long weighed the drawbacks of sure, although rough and ready entertainment, at the little hostelry in the village below—its sinewy chicken stalked, bagged, grilled, and served, all in the space of one short hour, with its tolerably clean bed to follow, against the even more slender accommodations of the shieling. In the former case, we should have two hours less of the sheets, and more of the saddle; and thinking of that darkling morning ride, laziness had carried the day against luxury. But that pleasant vice had been made a whip to scourge us with, for now we had risen from our sleepless couch with aching brows and fevered bodies.

We had rejected the offered 'braxy'—mutton stripped from a sheep that had come to a violent end, although not by the hand of the butcher—which was all that furnished out the patriarchal larder of the shepherd, and had preferred to make our supper of his bannocks and ewe-milk cheese. We had prudently striven to correct the surfeit of that simple fare, which mountain air and our lengthened ride had hurried us into, by proportionate libations of a fiery spirit, seemingly very many degrees above proof. It might have proved more of a stomachic, had our hospitable hostess not insisted upon flavouring it with a profusion of the coarsest of brown sugars, which looked the production of the spare moments of some industrious negro squatter, made with the rudest utensils from the growth of his own cane-patch. Our host's anxiety to entertain us was seconded but indifferently by his powers of conversation; and early as it was when we had finished our meal, we felt tired and sleepy, and very ready to retire. Even the

box-bed which yawned for our reception seemed seductive enough with its sheets and pillows white as the driven snow.

When our entertainers left us in the 'ben'—the chamber of honour—and themselves returned to the 'but,' we lost no time, after our different fashions, in our preparations for the night. With blind confidence in appearances, I made my usual toilet, and then buried myself in the comfortable-looking bed; while my more wary companion, contenting himself with removing coat, necktie, and boots, only threw himself on the top of it. Drowsy as I was, I only feared that if the shepherd neglected us, we should never succeed in waking so long before our accustomed hour; but even had we been steeped in poppies, drenched with mandragora, and wrapped in eider-down, I believe I need have given myself no uneasiness on that head. We blew out the rushlight; and for my own part, and before my head had well touched the pillow, I was sound asleep. When I woke again, my first glance was instinctively towards the little window, to see if the sun had not stolen a march on us, and already got up for the day; but no light whatever came filtering through the dirty pane, and I was obliged to strike one, that I might find out from my watch what time was left me for my second sleep. It had been exactly 9.25 when I wound it up before going to bed; now it was precisely 9.30; and, roughly speaking, I must have slept rather over three minutes. But I had little difficulty in tracing to its first cause a fact at first sight so astounding. Already as thoroughly wide awake as if I had taken a header in ice-cold water after a ten-hours' sleep, I became conscious that my unhappy body had become the rallying-point for all the animal life of the cottage, a field where all its hoppers and jumpers were making their hay while the sun was gone. Defenceless as I was from their onslaughts, I had been the first to suffer; but already they were penetrating the armour which, in the shape of tweeds and flannels, protected my friend. Had I not known the cause of his restlessness, as he tossed from side to side, throwing his arms wildly about with distorted features and mysterious

mutterings, I should have felt convinced that some unholly secret sat heavy on his mind. As it was, it only needed the light from the wax-match falling on his eyes to rouse him to full consciousness; and as I slipped from the bed, he sat up on it, and we held a council of war. The barriers his clothes opposed to the enemy were speedily carried or mined: the attack had it all its own way; the defence was nowhere. The termites of the tropics may be more formidable, but mountain fleas are in no way behind them in perfection of organisation.

Notwithstanding our reluctance to hurt the feelings of our host, by seeming to despise the quarters he had offered with such good-will, a longer stay in that chamber of horrors was out of the question; so, having thrown on our clothes, perforce we returned to the room we had quitted. It was also the sleeping-chamber of the family; but though the night was a warm one, its inmates had shut themselves up in the cupboard that formed their bed, so that our intrusion was of the less consequence. We drew a chair and a stool to the peat-fire, which had been left smouldering for the night, heaped on fresh fuel; and propping ourselves against the wall on each side of the chimney, so that, in the event of being suddenly overtaken by sleep, we might not tumble forward into the flame, we lit our pipes, and relapsed into sulky meditation.

Fir-stools, and a profusion of skirmishers that the great army of the night had left behind them in their retreat, proved marvellous antisoporifics; and before the first twinkling of dawn had penetrated the crevices of our host's bed, we were up and stirring, and were on our way to take a plunge in the stream that ran below when we met the reader. We came back quite sufficiently refreshed to do hasty justice, under the name of breakfast, to a repetition of the supper of the night before, minus the toddy. So little time was lost in all this, that even when we started for the second time from the cottage, the light was only just beginning to have its own way, and some shades of the night still lay lingering in the lowest depths of the valley. All over the British Islands, the population lay slumbering and snoring, with the exception of the more hardened votaries of the London season, some policemen, cabmen, stokers, game-keepers, burglars, and birds of night by taste or trade. It is to be hoped that most people have, at some period of their life, experienced the delicious exhilaration of the first freshness of the mountain air at early morning—whether blowing off snow-peaks and fields of ice, as you breasted some alpine col, or coming to you breathing of peat and heather, as you started for a day's work in moor or forest.

But in these cases, your hands are filled for the day—no rest for you until you choose to take it, or till you are tired enough to be very ready to appreciate it. The take-off from otter-hunting is, that you must rise almost overnight, while the scent yet lies fresh, and before your stealthy

quarry has made himself comfortable for the day in his subaqueous dwelling. You come home from a very short night's rest, and probably a very hard morning's work, while the rest of the world is thinking of its bath, and only contingently of its breakfast; and with all your intellectual resources, and after a long siesta in the middle of the day, you are apt to find time hang heavy on your hands before the dinner-hour comes round. But now we have little time for such speculations, and independently of the excitement of the hunt, the mere change to light and air, from the dark stuffy cabin, is happiness enough to insure a high average of enjoyment for the day.

The shieling in which we slept was built in a sheltered nook near the bottom of a steep range of hills, whose grassy slopes were dotted in all directions with flocks and herds. Those on the opposite side were covered deep with heather; there the green patches were as rare as the purple ones were on our side of the water; and while those were consecrated to grouse, these were devoted to mutton. The lonely stream in the bottom was a favourite haunt of the otters, and looked the very place where they might breed undisturbed and shift for their living in peace. It was rarely that it had been hunted in due form, so there was the less chance of our drawing it blank. Now it came tumbling over its gravelly bottom in an impetuous rush; flung back from the rocks in the channel that broke its course, it had worked great cavities under the banks, till, in many places, the footing by the edge had become as precarious as it looked secure. Now it ran, or rather stagnated, as it rested in some wide pond-like reach fringed with sedge and rush, and overhung with willow and alder. Otters there must be, and the problem was first to find and then to kill, where they had all the chances of land and water so greatly in their favour.

It was close on the hour of meeting, when, supporting ourselves with our otter-spears, we walked up-stream along the steep slippery hillside towards the trysting-place. It was a 'bit' that had gladdened the heart of many an artist, and had more than once hung on the walls of the Academy. A high old-fashioned arch of heavy stonework, clamped here and there with iron, bridged the stream. The parapets had disappeared, probably quarried away by some neighbouring farmer, for the masonry was massive enough to have bid defiance to time and fair-play. Although now used only for the convenience of some occasional shepherd or sportsman, it had been built originally as the approach to the old peel, whose square tower still stood perched on the bank above, and to the hamlet, whose foundations only could be traced in the heather below, for the valley had been thickly inhabited before the natives had been driven out by southdowns. But now the group of figures in the foreground attracted our attention from the scenery. Two or three neighbouring sheep-farmers and a couple of keepers sat wrapped in their plaids on a knoll standing out of sight of the water, while a canopy of gray smoke from their short pipes hung floating over their heads in the still morning air. Looking over our shoulders, about half a mile down the valley, we could see the master of the hounds and his pack just diverging from the track by the river-bank, and they came up to the rendezvous only a few minutes later than ourselves.

A greater contrast than they presented to even the least pretensions of provincial fox-hounds can hardly be conceived. Here, everything was for use, and nothing whatever for show. The man who takes to otter-hunting follows it for its own sake, at hours and at distances from decent accommodation which effectually secure the selectness of his field. In this case, he had ridden overnight some five-and-twenty miles, though the bright clear eyes and hard bony frames of himself and the strong-bred pony that carried him shewed no symptoms of it. You could see no traces of fatigue about either the man who officiated as whip, or the six or seven couples of hounds who had covered the same distance on foot. Indeed, the whole party—men and beasts—looked the perfection of training, all sinew and muscle, wire and whip-cord. A glance at the dogs shewed that their master was utterly superior to prejudice on the score of blood, breeding, or size, for a more motley-looking and ill-assorted lot it would have been hard to get together. But there was something about each individual hound that marked him the right stuff for the work. Such as they were, fox-hounds and water-spaniels must have figured largely in their family-trees, and it would have been rash to affirm that any English breed was altogether unrepresented there.

Early as it was, the morning was getting on, and moments were golden; so, after brief greetings interchanged, we moved on to the water, our whole field consisting, in addition to those we have named, of some ten or a dozen sportsmen, or idlers, who had attached themselves to the master in the last village he had passed, or fallen into his train on the road. The hounds are uncoupled; in a moment they are questing along the banks, forcing themselves into all places possible and impossible, here half-wading, half-swimming among the roots of some overhanging willow, there hunting so conscientiously up to the very edge of the water as to lose their footing and tumble in through the deceitful fringe of rank heather and bracken. The splash brings the other dogs with an excited yell to the spot, only to rush away with a growl of disgust on finding it a false alarm.

At first, it seemed as if we were to find specimens of all the *feræ natura* of the valley except the particular one we were in quest of. Grouse-cocks spring from the heather with their cheerful crow; black-cocks rise from the fern with heavy lumbering flight, but soon get up the steam, and sweep round the next shoulder at thirty miles an hour; coots and water-hens dash from the sedges, flying low over the still pools, the tips of their wings rippling the glassy surface as if a couple of grape-shots had hopped over the water; a wild duck gives her young family convoy across the stream, seeming to cast back reproachful glances at the intruders on the close season, as if scandalised at their having beat up her quarters under a flag of truce; and high up the valley, a couple of roe-deer, scared by our noise from some clump of bushes, are seen crossing the ridge before us with graceful bounds.

But though the dew still hangs on every spray of the trees, and loads each blade of grass and each sprig of heather, there are no signs of an otter, and yet the scent must be magnificent. The hounds hunt on as keenly as ever; but the gray muzzled patriarch of the pack, in whose preternaturally sagacious features a disciple of Pythagoras might trace the lineaments of some departed philosopher,

more than once stops and looks up in his master's face, as if to say that he can't understand this at all, and that in his long experience he had never felt so surprised and disgusted. That gentleman seems to be quite of the old dog's opinion; but the farmers of the glen feel that the character of their river is at stake, and swear stoutly that it swarms with otters, and that our bad-luck cannot possibly last; while the keepers would back them up bravely with a string of corroborative facts, were there only time to listen to them.

Just then, a young hound, who has slipped away, and been questing a long way ahead, gives tongue with a confidence that draws the others to his side, some of them upsetting each other head over heels in their impatience to be up. The solitary voice swells into a chorus, that is echoed and re-echoed from hill and rock, and flung across from side to side of the valley. The men are but little behind the dogs. Using their spears as leaping-poles, they swing themselves from knoll to hillock, and clear holes and hollows; and there, sure enough, on the low sand-spit below the bank, is the seal of the otter. His recent presence is established by a still stronger *pièce de conviction*, for on a low grassy edge beyond we find the remains of what must have been a pound and a half trout before the huge bite was taken out of its shoulder. We have just scared him away from his early breakfast; and had we been on the spot as soon as the hounds, we should doubtless have seen the grass bent down, where he had slipped over into the water.

He must have gone up-stream, and, according to all appearances, cannot have had many minutes' start of us, so all is bustle and excitement. The shrill cry of the dogs rises through the loud shouts of the men, and at the din, the sheep on the hill-sides run together into trembling flocks. The hounds puzzle out every foot of bank; their eyes starting from their heads, and their chests, heaving in short spasmodic bursts, shew the state of excitement they have worked themselves into. Nearly as amphibious as the animal they are looking for, now they go wading along under the overhanging grass, forced from time to time to swim, when the strong rush of water sweeps them off their legs—they cross the stream from side to side, just as one bank strikes them as more tempting than the other; and, wherever it is at all practicable, the men take to the water just as freely, though now and then a false step sends some very keen hand down with an exclamation, cut short or stifled by a guggle in the throat. One man, carefully accoutred in wading-stockings, has already been in over the neck, and now carries about his legs extra weight in the shape of several gallons of water.

One or two of the old hounds keep very much on the bank, but with their keen eyes fixed eagerly on the water, and now one of them, with a short sharp yowl, takes a header into the stream. His eye has caught the air-bubbles rising to the surface where the otter vented as he struck out below for dear life. That active gentleman gives his assailant the slip; but now the game becomes very hot indeed for him. The pool where he was swimming is alive with dogs, and many a yard up and down the banks are watched by eager men. Some way below, the stream runs so shallow, that he cannot possibly pass there without detection; further up, it comes down in a series of deep

rushes between rocks and stones, and on that side it is equally unlikely that he can escape unseen. If he stay where he is, he may puzzle us for long; but it will be hard lines if he escape altogether. More than once, we view the bubbles from his breath; twice his head appears for a moment on the surface; and once, under the roots of a broom-bush, he and one of the hounds meet almost teeth to teeth. Gallantly he keeps up the game of hide-and-seek, but the odds against him are too long; and, as the lesser of two evils, he thinks it better to be off, in spite of the enemies who beset his path.

So far he gives us all the slip as to make good his retreat to the shallow below, where those who watch it can see his long back breaking the surface. A gigantic sheep-farmer, as eager after first-blood as ever a hog-hunter on the plains of the Deccan, gathers himself together, poises his lance, and from the stone on which he is standing, delivers the thrust with the full force of a herculean arm. He misses the mark by a foot, loses his balance, the spear glances off the pebbles at the bottom, and down goes the sportsman head foremost into the water. Lucky for him that the accident happened where it did, for he can't swim a yard, and had it been in a pool instead of a shallow, no one would have found time to fish him out. His vast bulk damming the stream, has done his work well, though unintentionally, for had the otter but pressed onwards, he must have reached the long depths of the river below, and all the work would have had to begin again, and under much less favourable circumstances. As it is, the otter, if the less hurt, is the more frightened of the two, and altogether losing his presence of mind, dashes back into the jaws of the pack.

Diving and swimming, he threads the dangers gallantly, and with so much success as to be able to make another attempt at leaving the dangerous locality. This time, he tries the staircase at the other end, but it is far too well guarded to give him a chance. One of the keepers has a fair blow at him as he struggles up between a couple of stones, and though the lance comes back to his hand, this time its blade is tinged with red. It missed the shoulder, and struck but glanced from the forehead. But the dogs are pressing on him closely from below, and again he plunges blindly forward, this time only to be pinned by a well-directed thrust from the practised arm of the master. He raises his struggling captive on the point of his spear high over the heads of the pack, and at the sight, the sedate-looking hounds who had trotted to the meet in decorous couples, and somewhat sobered by their night-walk, seem changed into ravening wolves. They bound up, making stepping-stones of each other's backs, their white tusks gleaming, and their fierce eyes flashing, although, as there is but little foothold, they are continually being swept back by the rapid current, and have to struggle up again from the deep water below.

The master is too good a sportsman to prolong unnecessarily the torture of his victim, and using him as if he loved him, though in a different sense from old Izaak Walton, he soon puts him out of his misery; and by this time the sun is high in the heavens, and our sport at an end. Seating ourselves on the hillside, pipes are lit and flasks passed round; all is as sunny below as above, and even the hounds smooth down their bristles and

meet our caresses half-way. Before we start on our return, we have a pleasant chat over the incidents of the morning, and all our respective feats by land and water.

## THE MOORLAND MILL.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.—CHAP. V.

EARLY the next morning, Caroline was at the bedside of her aunt, apparently very anxious to efface any lingering recollection of what might have been unsatisfactory on the previous evening. Mrs Watkin inquired where Stephen was, and Caroline, who was already fully dressed, and had been downstairs, replied that he had gone over to the mill.

'I think you should have bid him good-night,' said the aunt.

'To go away from home and take drink, is not the way to overcome a temptation,' answered Caroline, with quickness and irritation.

'A temptation!'

'It is the way to let a man lose what little power of self-control he has. Satan likes to catch a man in that condition,' excitedly went on Caroline, not heeding the interruption.

'You are shivering,' said Mrs Watkin, more closely scrutinising her niece.

'Am I? It is nothing.'

The aunt shook her head, for Caroline, even while she answered so lightly, had a violent tremor in every limb, and her face, examined closely, was very worn and haggard. She could have had very little sleep. 'Go down-stairs, and get a cup of warm coffee. You must not quarrel with Stephen; it will make you ill. I don't know whether you are quite managing him rightly, but I have no doubt he is most to blame, and so I shall tell him. I won't have him making you ill while I am here, at any rate.'

'Don't speak to him, aunt. It will make matters worse if he thinks you know anything,' said Caroline, dashing away the tears which this touch of sympathy had instantly called up. 'I was not quite straightforward yesterday,' and she forced her liquid blue eyes to meet the aunt's gaze. 'Those papers were not about machinery; but do not ask me—you said you would not. I felt I must say this, for how can I pray for others, if I am not myself truthful?'

'No—no, you could not,' slowly answered the aunt, looking at her niece in much astonishment. 'But go and get something warm. We will talk about it another time. See how you are shaking again. I'll be down directly,' and she led Caroline towards the door. Mrs Watkin was a woman of strong curiosity, but her other natural feelings were also energetic, and she just then felt nothing but alarm and sympathy for Caroline.

When the aunt rejoined her niece in the sitting-room, Caroline appeared greatly to have rallied. Stephen, some time after, sent a boy from the mill to fetch his breakfast, saying he was busy; possibly, his recollections of the previous night made him reluctant to face his female relatives so soon. He, however, appeared at dinner, and with the exception that he still avoided Caroline's gaze, and had very little to say, there was nothing noticeable in him. Caroline did not go over to the mill, which was quite in opposition to her usual practice; and twice during the day, her aunt came upon her unexpectedly, once in the garden arbour, and again



in the side-parlour, intently bending over the mysterious papers which had already so puzzled Mrs Watkin. The latter did not now follow up her inquiries; on the contrary, she pretended not to have observed anything, and passed over Caroline's perturbation without remark, the truth being, that she was alarmed by the latter's singular conduct and altered appearance. Towards the close of the afternoon, Mrs Watkin herself went across to the mill, as she said, to fetch Stephen to tea, which she had hurried on a little, upon Caroline's account, who, at dinner-time, scarcely ate anything. It was, however, plain that, in spite of Caroline's adjuration in the morning, the aunt had a further object in this visit. She must have made it an opportunity to have some talk with Stephen as to his sister's state of health, for on entering the parlour, Mrs Watkin standing by, with somewhat of expectation in her manner, he went direct to Caroline, and in a rather shamefaced, awkward way, said he was sorry she was not well. She made a friendly reply, couched neither very warmly nor the contrary. But Mrs Watkin's little plan was not exhausted. At the close of the meal, she quitted the room, leaving them together, and remained absent for some time. As she returned along the passage, she heard Caroline's voice, raised above the natural pitch: 'I have no confidence in you, Stephen. This thing has returned upon you twice; and I feel that a trouble of some kind is hanging over us.'

Stephen made some indistinct reply, and advancing to the door as his aunt pushed it open, passed her, his face glowing crimson, and left the house.

Almost immediately after this, Caroline had another bad shivering attack, and Mrs Watkin seemed much depressed at the apparent ill-success of her well-meant management. Caroline, too, was very restless—going aimlessly out of one room into another; and on one occasion, when her aunt had followed her from the parlour into the sitting-room, she was startled by Caroline turning quickly upon her with the curious question: 'Aunt, did you ever have a strong temptation?'

'Whatever do you mean?' asked the amazed aunt, a little colour coming into her faded cheeks.

'A thought that takes full possession of you,' and Caroline raised one hand, and pressed it above her wild eyes—'haunting you till you can think of nothing else?'

'No, I don't know that I had. If I had, I should have asked God to help me, and should have struggled against it.'

'I struggle against it,' answered Caroline, now speaking with unnatural coldness, and she turned abruptly away.

Mrs Watkin's apprehensions increased, this behaviour was so strikingly opposed to Caroline's customary quiet demeanour. Making a pretext for going into the kitchen, the aunt sent Mary to the mill with a private message to Stephen; then, sauntering to the front-door, she met her nephew, and they had a whispered conversation at the gate. He seemed as disturbed as Mrs Watkin, though in a different way; and the result of the conference was, that he struck off along the road leading down the valley, while his aunt returned into the house.

Stephen was, in fact, gone to tell Mr Watson that Caroline was not well, and to ask him to come up the first thing in the morning, calling as if by accident, and see her. Stephen and Mrs Watkin had agreed that that would be better than asking Caroline openly to have medical advice; they

feared she might say no; and if Mr Watson had hurried up at once, they also doubted whether that would have pleased her. But it was hoped by both of them that the surgeon would be there early in the morning.

# CHAPTER VI.

'I do not quite understand it, Mrs Watkin. She has a low fever, certainly, and that will make her feel fatigued. It is a common symptom, ma'am. But her foot—you said she was not out yesterday?' broke off Mr Watson, for the speaker was the friendly surgeon, who had 'accidentally' called that morning, and had just seen Caroline alone in the sitting-room.

'No, sir; she staid indoors all day,' answered Mrs Watkin, the two being now together in the side-parlour.

'It is a fresh cut; it can't be twenty-four hours old; a clean incised wound on the sole of the left foot, ma'am, more than an inch in length; and it seems to be rather deep. She says she does not know how it was done, which is odd, for it must have given a sharp twinge at the time. Wash it for her in tepid water, and bind it up, not over-tightly. I'll send a strip of plaster along with the mixture.'

'She must have trod upon something sharp, though I do not know what. I will look the carpet over in her chamber. She did not complain of her foot to me,' added Mrs Watkin.

'I saw she had that slipper off, and seemed to be nursing the foot, so I asked her the reason. She did not appear to have examined it herself.' And the surgeon widened his eyes. 'It is just like a cut the split stones on the moor might make, if she had been walking there in very thin boots. But if she was not out yesterday, it can't be that.'

Mrs Watkin shook her head, and looked puzzled.

'Not that it is of any consequence,' briskly wound up the surgeon, rearranging his thin gray hair on his temples. 'Wash it, and plaster it. The great thing will be to feed her well, and keep her cheerful, for she has very suddenly got out of sorts. Mental anxiety of some kind, I expect.—I wish they were out of the mill, for it has always been a losing concern to everybody.'

'Did she mention any matter of anxiety, sir?' rather keenly asked Mrs Watkin.

'Not particularly—no.—Are you aware of anything, ma'am?' and the male gossip craned forward eagerly.

'Nothing specially,' was the measured reply.

There was no malice in Mr Watson's inquisitiveness. From living in that lonely district, where topics of conversation were so rare, he would at any time have given a moderate round sum for a confidential chat with man, woman, or child. The conversation went on a little further, each being very formally polite to the other; but Mr Watson was doomed to partial disappointment, for Mrs Watkin, as we know, had herself been checkmated by Caroline, and not caring to avow her own ignorance, the lady had to affect reserve. Mr Watson reassuringly predicted that the wonderful mixture he was going to send up would quickly put Caroline all to rights again; and that there might be no delay, he hurried away, intending to take somebody from the cottages to bring back the medicine. But he intimated that he should make another visit on the following morning.

Caroline was evidently ill, and sat pale and shivering by the sitting-room fire; she, however, refused to lie down upon the sofa, and made light of her feelings altogether. Mrs Watkin questioned her about her foot, but she had no explanations to give of it, although the aunt, when she insisted upon bathing it, found quite a bad cut exactly as Mr Watson had described it. The medicine promised by the surgeon arrived in course of time, and Caroline allowed her aunt to have her way in reference to it, though she smiled sceptically as she took it from her hands. Stephen appeared to be much affected by his sister continuing so unwell, and in his own way was very attentive to her, spending an unusual proportion of time at home; but Caroline, although she shewed not the slightest ill-temper, but talked with him a little, seemed not at ease in his presence, and, as it were, shrunk from the intercourse. As the day wore on, Caroline did nothing but brood over her own thoughts, gazing into the fire hour after hour, and answering remarks only in single sentences; the only break to this being in an occasional fit of restlessness, when she would drag herself to the window, moving with pain, and complaining of a curious stiffness of the limbs, and of great fatigue. Still, rest she would not; and Mrs Watkin, to distract Caroline's attention, at last asked her if she thought she was strong enough to go over to the mill.

'I shall not go there any more,' instantly replied her niece, looking up with scared eyes at her relative, and giving a sudden shiver from head to foot. 'When I am a little more myself, I shall insist on our giving it up at once.'

'Yes, I would,' soothingly said Mrs Watkin; and she there gladly let the matter rest. But shortly afterwards, when the next attack of restlessness seized Caroline, the aunt said: 'Suppose we go into the garden for a few minutes?'

'No, aunt; O no! If I go outside the door, I shall go up the valley; I could not restrain myself!' and Caroline threw up her arms. Then she almost rushed to the chair on the hearth, and nestled closely in it, her aunt staring at her in surprise and alarm.

Later, Mrs Watkin had some further talk with Stephen, saying that if Mr Watson's physic had not improved Caroline by morning, she must have other, more authoritative advice. The hints she could not quite restrain, that his conduct had had something to do with his sister's illness, had a greater effect upon Stephen than she anticipated; and if Mrs Watkin could have forgotten her mysterious talks with Caroline, he would have risen higher in her estimation for what would then have seemed a sensitive brotherly sympathy. As it was, she looked at him all the more narrowly with her gray eyes. He was ready to start for the neighbouring town at once to fetch another doctor, but Mrs Watkin decided that they should wait till morning before that step was taken. During the evening, Caroline's restlessness increased rather than lessened, and the usual hour for retiring early, as it was ordinarily, was anticipated somewhat, in the hope that she might be more comfortable in bed. To the aunt's surprise, Caroline hesitatingly expressed a wish that Mary, the servant-girl, should sleep with her that night. Mrs Watkin immediately said no, for that she herself would do so. But Caroline, in a curiously embarrassed manner,

refused to consent to this; her aunt's sleep, she said, would be broken; and, in the end, she went to bed alone, Mrs Watkin carrying the medicine into her own room, stating that she should take it into Caroline's chamber at the proper times, and see that there was no neglect in reference to it. So things quietly settled down for the night in that roadside house by the mill; but just as the dawn was breaking, a sudden alarm effectually aroused all who were left within it.

'Caroline is gone! She isn't in bed, nor in the house!' shrieked Mrs Watkin, knocking wildly at Stephen's chamber-door.

'Not in the house!' he echoed a few seconds later, rushing forth, partly dressed. 'Her bed is still warm!' he shouted, re-emerging from Caroline's room, into which he had first hurried.

'The front-door is open!' called Mrs Watkin from below, where she had gone to awake the servant, who slept in a little end ground-floor room.

'She is gone to the mill-dam!' gasped Stephen, and uttering a kind of howl, he plunged down the staircase, and, dashing past the screaming women, hurried out of the house. They had to return each to her bedroom for some articles of clothing; then they followed him, keeping close together in vague affright.

It was just daybreak. The red-brick mill, the zigzag road, the gables of the distant cottages, and the surrounding hills, with reaches of the moorland disclosed in their openings—all were distinctly visible in the gray light; for what fog there had been was rolling away up the sides of the tall, solitary cliff to the left, as if it had collected in one spot. The birds were awaking, their shrill pipings answering each other from every quarter, shivering, it might almost be said, in the cold, thin morning air; and the murmuring of the stream flowing through the arches underneath the road, made itself heard in a sharp tinkling. Beyond those interruptions, all was oppressively, harshly silent, for the women had hushed their screams, and, without speaking, gave chase down the road after Stephen. When Mrs Watkin and Mary turned the angle of the mill-yard wall, they commanded a partial view of the upper valley, and at once caught sight of Stephen, now ahead of them a long way; but before they had struggled on another hundred yards, they both saw him suddenly stop, and raise his hands, though without turning to them. As they neared him, he ejaculated something, and staggered forward a few more yards; then, again he stopped, and again his hands went up.

'It is she!' articulated Mrs Watkin, panting for breath, and pointing where, far along the black line of the path, and a little way from a shining patch with a faint mist rising above it, marking the dam, a narrow white figure was discernible, advancing, as it seemed, in their direction. The girl, too, uttered a cry of recognition at this sight, and went a short way forward unaccompanied.

'She has done it!' exclaimed Stephen, the look upon whose face was awful for terror. 'Hark! the top valve is open!' and, in his excitement, he struck aside Mrs Watkin's hand outstretched towards him.

'Valve?' The thought of the papers she had found Caroline studying flashed across Mrs Watkin. 'Valve?' she repeated, withdrawing her look from where he stood, bare-headed and only half-dressed, listening eagerly forwards, and turning it up the

valley, towards the shining streak of mist, from which the white figure was still descending.

'There it goes!' yelled Stephen, and quitting his aunt's side, he darted down towards the centre of the valley, waving his arms like a madman.

Mrs Watkin's ear had previously detected a faint, dull, watery roar higher up the valley, very different from the ordinary sound of the stream; and, as Stephen spoke those last words, she saw a little snowy column shoot into the air at the bottom point of the shining patch, and immediately it broke into a puff, and dispersed into white steam; then, instantly afterwards, there came on the still air, a swelling, rushing noise, which increased and increased, until, at a turn of the valley, there leaped into view a visible wave of water, rolling with an unwieldy tumbling motion down the bed of the stream. The mill-dam had burst!

Mrs Watkin stood fascinated, watching the advance of the torrent, but the thought of Caroline broke the spell, and as the deluge went thundering past down below, she found her tongue again, and hurried forward to meet her niece. Caroline, during all this time, had continued to advance from the other direction, and now was not very far away; but between her and Mrs Watkin was the girl, Mary, who had stopped, and, half-cowering in the path, gazed in affright at her young mistress. She had sufficient cause! Caroline was dressed in nothing but her long white night-clothes, and, with one arm pressed tightly across her chest, and the other hanging stiffly by her side, was briskly coming straight along the path, apparently taking no heed of anything. Her face, they saw, as she came nigher, was of the most deathly paleness, and her large blue eyes, wide open, stared right on, unblinkingly.

'Summut is the matter wi' her!' cried the servant-girl, shrinking aside.

'She is asleep!' gasped Mrs Watkin, and she, too, stopped short where she stood, in sheer wonder, gazing at her.

Without a glance either to the right or to the left, Caroline, in her white robes, passed between the two, accurately following the line of the path; and although, at that moment, a sharp, tearing crash in the direction of the mill rose above the dull wash of the rolling flood just below, she appeared not to hear so much as the stirring of a gorse-bush.

'There is blood! See her feet! Oh, she is hurt!' and before Mrs Watkin could lift a finger, the ignorant, impulsive girl, pointing to Caroline's naked feet, both of which now shewed bleeding cuts, had rushed forward and seized the sleep-walker's dress.

With an instantaneous shock, Caroline stopped. Just as her aunt reached her, she was ending a startled, terrified look about her, and, uttering a shrill yet half-choked scream, she staggered sideways, and was falling heavy and helpless as a corpse, had they not caught her. Very fortunately, she had swooned; but the servant-girl, if not the aunt also, in the first instance, mistook it for death, and each called piteously for Stephen. Him, as they upheld his sister, they could see still gesticulating wildly, standing upon an elevated point in the valley below, apparently close to the edge of the flooded stream, which was still going tumbling by. They had commenced themselves to drag and carry Caroline along the path before he joined them.

'The mill-wheel has gone and the wall!' he said, in a voice so hoarse the words could hardly be distinguished. He was shaking so from head to foot, that for a minute or two he could give them no help whatever. But he made a violent effort at control, and grasping Caroline by the waist, he, in a kind of desperate frenzy, ran with her along the path, almost dispensing with the help of the others.

As they crossed the turnpike-road with their burden, shouts were to be heard at the cottages whither the noise of the catastrophe had reached; and hardly had they carried Caroline in over the threshold of the door, when the work-people, young and old, some wrapped only in their bed-coverings, came streaming up the road to gaze upon the ruin which had wrecked the mill, and with it their prospect of work in that district. Some bemoaned it, and others laughed, without much merriment in the laughter.

The flood, having done its work, was already decreasing; the dam was becoming exhausted; but the destructive wave, all knew, was still rolling upon its way somewhere below; and before long, the dwellers in half-a-dozen valleys further down the moors would become aware, by the devastation of their own property, that the dam of Lindon Mill had burst!

#### CHAPTER VII.

A long distressing illness lay before Caroline Kenyon, though for some days it was doubtful whether it would not be cut short by a termination which would have been sadder still. Other doctors, in addition to Mr Watson, were called in; and Stephen, who himself had a most stricken, ailing look, watched by Caroline with a patience and anxiety that shamed the assiduity of ordinary nurses, gaining for him the highest praise. If Mrs Watkin seemed to be less touched than did others by this brotherly devotion, it might be owing to her understanding better how he had been the original cause of all that had happened. Caroline's recovery, in its first stage, was very painful as well as slow. For a day and a night, no sooner did consciousness seem to be fully re-establishing itself than she would be suddenly seized by a paroxysm of fright, and with a shriek, heart-piercing to those about her, she would sink again into a swoon, which had all the appearance of being mortal. Neither the medical men nor the others, with the exceptions of Stephen, the aunt, and the servant-girl, knew the full cause for this. Mrs Watkin bathed and bound up Caroline's feet in secret, and none of the rest knew that she had been outside the house on that fatal night. They believed that the calamity at the mill had aroused her in her bed, and that a glance from one of the windows had done the rest. Slowly the crisis passed, and Caroline, faint and weak as an infant, began to take notice of matters about her; and now, strange to say, she seemed to have no recollection whatever of the terrible scene to which she awoke for a moment in the valley. Even the news that the mill was stopped, which had to be communicated to her when she asked a question about the bell not ringing for meals, and the clack of the wheel being silent, did not appear in any way to startle her at the instant; but not many minutes afterwards, an affrighted curiosity seemed visibly to awaken in her; and in reply to further quick inquiries, they had to tell her, which they did as lightly as they



could, that the mill-dam had burst, carrying away the wheel and part of the yard-wall. A spasm of terror convulsed her wan features, and, with a violent tremor of the limbs, she again swooned. Those in attendance thought it was but the natural agitation of the news working upon her weakness; but when Caroline's senses had returned, she intimated a wish to be left alone with her aunt; even Stephen, whom this greatly alarmed, she signed to leave the room. When the two were alone, Caroline, trying vainly to raise herself in bed, fixed Mrs Watkin with her bright eyes.

'Aunt,' she whispered, clutching at the bed-curtains to check her trembling, 'did I blow up the dam?'

Mrs Watkin's confusion was sufficient answer; and Caroline fell back upon the pillows with closing eyelids, as if stricken by a blow. But this time her feelings differently affected her; she did not swoon, but turning herself upon her face, she sobbed most piteously. Her weeping aunt did all she could to comfort her.

'Was it a sin?' at length moaned Caroline, shewing her agonised, worn face through her dishevelled hair. 'I did not know till now I did it.'

'You were asleep!' reassuringly murmured the aunt. 'You did not know what you did.'

'It was the papers. Where are they? I could not keep from studying them; and I felt, if I went out of doors, I must do it.—Where are the papers?' she entreatingly whispered. 'Oh, they are in Stephen's writing!'

'I have them; I found them that morning upon the floor here;' and Mrs Watkin took some crumpled papers from somewhere about her dress.

'Tear them up—the window,' feebly articulated Caroline.

The aunt, with shaking fingers, tore the papers into little bits; and, opening the casement, sent the fragments flying on the wind like snow-flakes.

Caroline, uttering an expression of relief, once more sunk backwards, completely exhausted, and the conversation then went no further.

That evening, Caroline drew her brother to her, slipping her arms around his neck; and, as she kissed him through her tears, he learned that she knew all. He too wept, and frankly expressed his penitence, vowing that he would be a firmer and a better man in future. Caroline tried to hush up his sorrow, even while she joined in it, and her manner towards him grew even more tender than it used to be before this calamity, for she, by some curious process, seemed almost to persuade herself that they had shared a great sin between them, so their repentance must be in common, and the pardon, when it came, would be a joint one. It was indeed a matter to puzzle more subtle reasoners than they were—how a temptation could so have shifted ground from one person to another, and the second victim of it, without being fully aware of the deed, have perpetrated the act from which both shrank!

The facts, however, were now clear enough. Caroline, upon finding, in Stephen's handwriting, the second papers, in utter despair at her brother's weakness, let the idea of the bursting of the dam so seize upon her mind that she was fascinated by the papers, and after further yielding to it by studying Stephen's fatal sketch of how the valves might be mismanaged, she had, in her sleep, on two consecutive nights, left the house, and gone to the dam, where, on the second visit, in a way it

would be idle to try to account for, she had raised one great heavy valve and closed another, and, but for the servant-girl's conduct, would have returned to the house and to her bed without awaking. But Caroline argued that it must have been a sin on her part, after so blaming Stephen for not better resisting the temptation, that she, even unconsciously, should actually yield to it. The pain these thoughts gave her would have retarded her recovery; but, luckily for everybody concerned, there came another to decide this controversy—one whose voice had much greater weight than either the frail Stephen's or the unauthoritative aunt's. Mr Grey, the young banker, made his appearance at the house as soon as he heard of the catastrophe, which was on the second day after its occurrence; he it was who summoned the London physician, and as Caroline grew stronger, Mr Grey's visits, while not less frequent, became still more prolonged. In the end, he learned all, jointly from Caroline and her pleased aunt. The mode in which he dealt with the perplexities of the case was possibly not the one which would satisfy learned casuists; but, on the other hand, we feel sure no mode of theirs would have been half so effective with Caroline.

'I don't care if you blew up ten mill-dams!' sweepingly asseverated that gentleman, standing beside the invalid's chair in the front-garden, some fortnight later.

'What, Edward! Don't you think it was sinful?' 'Not a bit!' was the bold answer; and the tall figure stooped its calm, confident eyes, to gaze into the pale face which was upturned. 'We dream a good many sins, most of us; but if we don't act them when we are awake, we are not blamed for them.'

'But I did act this!'

'Not when you were awake. And if the devil likes to cheat himself, that is his look-out. In this case, he did so clearly enough.'

'Don't you really think the worse of me for it?' and the bright eyes grew the brighter for a tear in each, as she eagerly awaited the answer.

'I think a great deal better of you, since it shews what an angel you are. If you had not been the best sister in the world, you would not have done it. I love you twice as well for it;' and the lips now descended, as well as the glances, and made oath of it.

Caroline chafed no more. That last argument ended all doubt: we are not quite sure whether it would not have half-persuaded her to sin again! Not another reason was required; but Mr Edward Grey proceeded to give some; fortunately, they did not in this case, as might have happened in many others, unsettle the conclusion. He said she ought not to tease herself with these thoughts, for that nobody had suffered from the occurrence but herself. In answer to her wondering look, he went on to prove it. The work-people who had been thrown out of work, he said, had had paid for them the expense of removing to another district, where 'hands' were wanted; then, the persons living on the banks of the stream lower down had had their little losses made good; and as for the mill itself and the dam, what did that injury matter? And lowering his face to her ear, he whispered: 'Those are *ours*; the purchase-deeds were signed by that hard old Mr Price this morning. All this will reduce your settlement-money, so that it is only you who suffer.'



We cannot record Caroline Kenyon's answer, for no printer's types have been yet invented for the representation of the soft, liquid sounds in which it was couched. It was, however, quite satisfactory to Mr Grey, although he by no means objected to repetitions of it in the gentle talk which followed.

Is there anything more needs adding? The mill was gutted of the machinery, which Stephen Kenyon took with him to another more likely district, where he is now a prosperous manufacturer of woollen cloth, instead of tapes. Mr Grey, the neighbouring banker, has a handsome, happy wife in Caroline; and they are often visited by a middle-aged widow-lady, belonging to a distant cathedral town, who firmly believes that in some way she was the means of bringing them together. If, in the coming season, any sportsman on the Derbyshire moors should wander wide, and getting across the border, should come among the valleys upon a ruined building, and a knot of half-deserted cottages, and, on inquiring, should learn that it was called Lindon Mill, let him keep our secret.

#### THE CHESIL BANK.

THE Chesil Bank is, perhaps, one of the most astonishing formations in England—not so much because it is wholly unique in character, for there are other somewhat similar banks at Lowestoft, near Barnstaple, Slapton, the Looe-bar near Helstone (at Hurst Castle), and in other places; but because of its immense size and extent, beside which it has some most remarkable peculiarities in its formation, which, so far as we are aware, are unique. Visitors to Weymouth and Portland can hardly have failed to be struck with its remarkable appearance, as it joins the Isle of Portland to the mainland. It is an enormous mass of shingle, extending for seventeen miles, from its origin at Bridport, to its abrupt termination against the cliffs of Portland. For about two miles of its extent from the former place, until it reaches the end of the cliffs, it is thrown, like other banks, against them; but at this point it gradually rises in height, and for the rest of its length has the appearance of an immense, and exceedingly well-formed railway embankment. From its origin, for seven miles, until it reaches Abbotsbury, it is joined to the mainland, though rising high above it—at the latter place, its dimensions are five hundred feet wide, and about twenty-five feet high. From Abbotsbury to Portland it still gradually increases in size, and at Portland it is six hundred feet wide, and forty feet high; but for the extent of this portion of ten miles, it leaves the land, and is thrown up, as it were, in the sea; while, between it and the land is a long estuary called the Fleet, communicating with the sea at Portland. Hence, the appearance of the Chesil Bank, as seen from an elevated point, such as St Catherine's Hill at Abbotsbury, is truly astonishing. It is like an immense *railway in the sea*, and it curves with a gentle and perfectly regular course from north-west to south-east, until it strikes land at Portland. Its formation thus in the middle of the sea is due to the existence of a submarine bed of Kimmeridge clay, which forms a kind of shelf, on which the shingle is piled up by the waves. On the land-side of the Fleet, which is about a mile wide, are seen the remains of the old cliffs and coast-line,

which probably existed before the Bank was formed. The sides of the Bank are very steep, and consequently the sea breaks on it with great violence, making it a dangerous coast for shipwrecks. The similar Bank at Hurst Castle is formed in the same way, by the piling up of stones by the waves on a bed of clay; and in each case, according to Lyell, this bed of clay is sometimes exposed to sight in severe storms. In such cases, although the waves remove temporarily immense masses of shingle, and carry them to the land-side, yet, very curiously, the Bank retains its exact position, and the Fleet is never filled up.

Not long ago, the writer of this paper, in company with a friend, traversed the whole of the Bank, to examine it well. We set out early one morning from Bridport harbour, taking, as our first day's excursion, the portion from Bridport to Abbotsbury, and resting at the latter place for the night. The next day, we proceeded along the second half of the Bank to its termination at Portland. It was exceedingly hot weather; and perhaps our readers know what it is to walk on shingle! We will only say, that during our two days' walk of seventeen miles, and especially on the second day, when we were *out at sea*, and could no longer go off the Bank to the green meadows to rest ourselves, we wished that it were possible to *boil* our pebbles, in some such way as the famous pilgrim to Loretto, whose penance it was to walk thither with peas in his shoes!

The excursion, however, well repaid us, for the views obtained from various points along the route are exceedingly beautiful. The old ruins at Abbotsbury; the gigantic stones of the old cromlech; the little chapel of St Catherine; the swannery, where the good monks are said to have kept thousands of swans; Hardy's Monument on the hill near—all along the gentle curve of that coast are ever-varying points of interest.

It would appear as if the Chesil Bank must have been in former times of less bulk than it is at present, for there is an account given us, in an old Saxon Chronicle of 1099, of a heavy sea that broke over the Bank, and flooded the fields on the other side. Leland also, writing in 1546, and Camden, in 1590, speak of it as being broken away by seas washing over it during south-west gales; whereas, at present, no storms, however violent, appear to have very much permanent effect on it. The latest record of a very severe storm is that of November 1824, when a great quantity of the shingle was thrown on to the land-side; and a curious circumstance is recorded of a large sloop, which was driven on to the Bank, and actually carried by the violence of the waves to its summit, where the crew appear to have coolly disembarked, and walked into Weymouth. Next day, they drew her down on the other side into the Fleet, and so sailed *round* Portland. Perhaps this is the only record of a circumnavigation of the island. But although even the most violent storms thus hardly affect the Chesil Bank, except by carrying away shingle, which is soon replaced by the sea, yet this very operation is accompanied by two remarkable phenomena. The first may be observed by any one who happens to be on the land-side at the time. If near the Bank, he will find himself enveloped in a perfect *shower* of shingle; so that, in the event of a shipwreck on the Bank, it is almost impossible to venture to the relief of the stranded crew. The other phenomenon consists in

the *blowing up* of the Bank at various parts. Any one who travels along the land-side will be at once struck by a long succession of depressions or gullies in its side; in fact, the land-side of the Bank has, at intervals, just the appearance of having been *quarried* for shingle—as if cartloads of stones had been removed here and there to mend roads. This curious result arises from percolation of water through the mass of the Bank, whereby, in great storms, an immense pressure is brought to bear on the weakest portions, and suddenly such a portion will blow up, carrying hundreds of tons of shingle to the land-side. This percolation of water through the Bank seems to extend sometimes further inland, for it is said that near Swyre village there is an intermittent salt-spring, ebbing and flowing with the sea.

Perhaps one of the most curious circumstances connected with this astonishing mass of shingle is the variation in the size of its pebbles. Any person who should travel along it from west to east, from Bridport to Portland, could not fail to be struck with the beautifully gradual increase in the size of the component atoms of the Bank. Where the Bank commences, near Bridport harbour, it consists of small pebbles of the size of a pea, mixed with sand from the Burton Cliffs. These pebbles increase in size as we travel along the Bank, and at Abbotsbury they have attained the general size of large beans; while on arriving at the end at Portland, they will be found to be as large as apples, and many even much larger. There is a well-known story of Dr Buckland, who was said to be such a good geologist, that if he were blindfolded, and set down in any spot of the country, he would be able, on removing the bandage, and examining a stone or a clod of earth, to indicate the part to which he had been brought. Similarly, it is said, with reference to this gradual change in size of the stones of the Chesil Bank, that it is so uniform and well marked, that smugglers landing on the Bank in the darkest night can determine their position with precision by merely taking up a pebble. This variation in size of the pebbles is also the cause of the curious change in the noise of the waves, which strikes our ear immediately—on comparing their sound at Abbotsbury, for instance, with that at Portland. At the former place, the sound made by the waves is of a *hissing* character, while at Portland it is a loud and prolonged *roar*. This change, though apparent, and even striking to any ear at all times, is wonderfully increased in a heavy gale of wind. We have never anywhere else heard the same peculiar deafening roar that we get at Portland in a storm, when the immense bank is overwhelmed by breakers, and, on account of its steepness towards the sea, each wave breaks upon it almost at right angles to its surface. This, aided by the size and hardness of the stones at this point, produces a sound peculiarly harsh and grating.

Now, as to the *cause* of this wonderful phenomenon. All the pebbles are brought by the tidal wave and by storm-waves from the coast to the west between Exmouth and Lyme-Regis. Hence, it is remarkable that the *largest* pebbles are carried *furthest*! Apparently, two separate causes tend to produce this result. First, we must remember that the strongest currents during the usual south-west winds will act more effectively out at sea, or towards Portland, than near the middle of the bay at Bridport, and will consequently carry the largest

pebbles to Portland, while the smallest remain thrown up at Bridport. Secondly, if we remember that, in comparing the force of the waves upon large and small pebbles, the larger ones will gain most in momentum, while the smaller have a proportionally larger surface to be acted upon, it will appear that the large pebbles will be carried *furthest* by violent waves, while the smaller will be carried *highest*, and will therefore *soonest* be thrown up out of the reach of any further action of the sea. All calcareous and easily worn pebbles are soon reduced to sand, and pass round Portland, so that the Bank consists of only the hardest kinds of stones, such as flint, jasper, &c.; and in consequence of the relative action just mentioned, it will be found that, while the small pebbles at Bridport and Abbotsbury are round and globular, those largest pebbles near Portland, in consequence of their being most exposed on the surface to the waves, are generally flat—a peculiarity noticed also at the coast near Budleigh, from which most of these pebbles are derived.

And this brings us to another curious thing about this Chesil Bank—namely, the source from which the immense mass of stones is derived. It is said that the country-people affirm that a reward of fifty pounds will be given to any one who can find two pebbles exactly alike, but they don't say *who* will give the prize! The fact is, that when we examine carefully along the Bank, as the writer of this paper has done, we shall find that the pebbles may be classed under three or four heads. Mr Coode, the engineer of the Breakwater, has written a small pamphlet on the subject, and by comparing his account with our own observations, we are led to assign the pebbles to the following classes: (1) The great majority of the stones are evidently chalk flints and flints from the greensand, which caps most of the hills between Exeter and Weymouth. The chalk strata at Beer Head are the most western in England, and no flints have ever been found further west than this point, except in one or two instances in Cornwall, where flints have been found, according to De la Beche, spread over fields near the sea, and supposed to have been brought as ballast by the old Phœnician traders from the opposite coast of Gaul. On the Chesil Bank there are a vast number of these flints, easily distinguishable, the chalk flints by their dark colour, and often by adhering silicate of lime; the greensand flints by their lighter colour, and particles of sand embedded in them. Some people have imagined that these flints might possibly be derived from the flint-bands which occur in a chert form in the oolite of Portland; but, apart from their difference in physical qualities, which would lead any one who saw them to separate them at once from this source, it must be remembered that *all* these pebbles come from the *west*, and could not therefore be derived from Portland. (2) A good many of the pebbles of the Chesil Bank are composed of red sandstone, generally marked by various spots of red, brown, and yellow. These are traced to their source at Budleigh-Salterton, where they occur on the beach in company with (3) jasper pebbles, and which are all brought down by the river Otter from Aylesbeare, and other hills in the interior of the district. On the Chesil Bank, these jaspers are frequently mistaken by ungeological visitors for pebbles of Devonian limestone, such as those which we see on the beach at Torquay; and the resemblance is

indeed sufficient to excuse the mistake. (4) We have also a certain proportion of green and red porphyritic pebbles, such as those which occur in the conglomerate cliffs of Torbay and Dawlish, but which are not thence derived, coming, as they do, from the Heavitree conglomerate, near Exeter. In no instance that we have been able to make out have we any class of pebbles derived from any point west of Exeter. For example, we find no chlorite from the Start Point—no serpentine from the Lizard—all is derived from cliffs or hills between Exeter and Bridport; and of many cliffs even here, no pebbles exist, being, in the cases of the softer strata, soon worn to sand, and so carried round Portland.

Such is a brief account of the chief features of the Chesil Bank. As we have said, its great peculiarities are its enormous mass, and its being formed and passing through the sea, separate from the land. It has a very beautiful outline when seen from the summit of the cliff at Portland, or viewed as an embankment from the level at Chesilton. It surpasses all other shingle-banks with which we are acquainted, which are, for the most part, merely bars at the mouths of rivers, or enclosing fresh-water lakes, as at Helstone and Slapton. That of Hurst Castle, at the mouth of the Solent, and opposite Yarmouth, is the only example, but on a smaller scale (so far as we know), of a true sea-bank formed on a submarine ledge or shelf of clay, and rising gradually in size from west to east, and deriving all its component pebbles from the double action of tidal currents and storm-breakers.

#### MONACO.

SOME years have passed since it occurred to M. Blanc to patronise Monaco, and to establish there a graft from a well-known institution at Homburg, with which his name and his immense fortune have so long been identified. When he selected Monaco as a new sphere for action, he probably foresaw, to a certain extent, the necessity that might thereafter arise to secure a safer field for future enterprise than that in which he had already made himself famous. Should the threatened downfall of his parent establishment, with others of like eminence, be virtually accomplished, he will have little misfortune to apprehend from the 'calamity' whilst the offspring at Monaco continues to flourish. His determination to render it equal to any emergency is evidenced in the alleged fact of his contemplating the expenditure of no less than thirteen millions of francs upon its enlargement and improvement. He has happily chosen his ground. No prettier spot than Monaco can be found in the Riviera. Independent of all that art has done to enhance its attractions, nature herself has, unsolicited, enriched it with every conceivable beauty in her power.

The present descendants of the Grimaldis are not a wealthy people; their impecuniosity is acknowledged in the land of their birth. We may therefore reasonably presume that the chief of their house was nothing loath to replenish his exchequer by a fortuitous co-operation with M. Blanc. That venerable person, with his invariable red velvet waistcoat and gold spectacles, is regarded by visitors with considerably greater interest and curiosity than is the prince himself, who, indeed, by rude comparison with this formidable rival for notoriety,

becomes quite a being of secondary importance in his own dominion. Despite his hereditary pretensions to local display, M. Blanc completely eclipses him in the magnitude of his belongings. The prince can never hope to compete with the retinue that M. Blanc maintains. The splendid band at the casino is composed of no less than fifty excellent performers, who play from a variety of the choicest masters twice every day in the year. His staff of croupiers and inspectors must number as many; and then there are servants in gorgeous liveries, and other attendants, both civil and military, too numerous to mention, all in the pay, and under the authority of this Grand-master of Mighty Mammon.

I have carefully studied the designs and appliances by which M. Blanc yearly enriches his coffers, and can form no other conclusion but, that to the same inordinate love of greed, the same infatuation, and the same reckless indifference which, in one way or the other, distinguish every desperate adventurer or foolish illusionist, are alone attributable the frequently overwhelming disasters that overtake the unfortunate at Monaco and other similar places. No suspicion of foul-play can obtain in the minds of those who are thoroughly *au courant* with the economy and discipline of the whole undertaking. At *roulette*, it is simply impossible to cheat, for reasons which will appear anon, and to *roulette* I intend to confine myself. I am no advocate for gambling in any phase or fashion; but a time-honoured axiom amongst us is, that 'even the "old gentleman" deserves his due,' and the sentiment it contains is precisely that which induces me to write this little sketch.

In the absence of a diagram, it is somewhat difficult to give the reader a perfect impression of what *roulette* is like. I will do my best to enlighten him, however.

The table is of large dimensions, say twelve or fourteen feet long, by five or six broad, and covered entirely with green baize; hence the well-known term, 'board of green cloth.' The *roulette* is in the middle, and may be described as a circular cavity, sunk like a basin several inches below the plane surface. Within this is a brazen revolving apparatus of polished brass, with a slightly convex-shaped bed, fitting closely at the circumference to the frame, but turning with ease and rapidity. Around the inner edge of this contrivance, and opening towards the centre, are thirty-seven small compartments, or stalls, formed by thin projecting slips of metal. These contain, in irregular order, thirty-six numbers, from one upwards, and a cipher called zero. With the exception of zero, all these compartments have black and red backgrounds alternately. From the centre of this turn-about rises a stem, with four short arms at the summit, disposed like the points of a vane, by any of which the machine is set going at the gentlest touch. A fixed mahogany bulwark encloses all, having on its inner side a narrow ledge, or indented track, whereon the ivory ball runs, impelled by a quick jerk of the finger, until the momentum is exhausted, and it falls upon the brazen receiver, and rolls into one of the divisions. One half of the table is a duplicate of the other—separated by the *roulette*. Down the middle of the cloth are painted in yellow four straight lines, reaching nearly to the bottom, subdivided transversely into thirty-six equal squares, containing figures, beginning at the *roulette* end at one, and



running from left to right successively up to thirty-six. A space equal to three squares is appropriated between the roulette and the first three numbers for zero. At the foot of the 'column' are three blank squares; and on each side of these, extending breadthwise, three oblong divisions, stamped respectively with the capital letters P, M, and D, meaning *Douze Premier*, *Douze Milieu*, and *Douze Dernier*. The wide margins of the table are also marked off into three equal but larger portions, facing one another across the columns. These comprise *Passe*, *Pair*, and *Rouge* on the left; and *Manque*, *Impair*, and *Noir* on the right. A double boundary-line encompasses all.

The usual complement of croupiers to every table is six, who are relieved every two hours; and there are never less than two inspectors present—sometimes more—who overlook the proceedings from raised seats behind the croupiers in charge of the bank, and to whom all disputes and differences are referred.

The risks at roulette are manifold, ranging from almost equal chances up to thirty-six to one against the player. The system upon which these various risks are distributed is extremely ingenious, though at first sight rather perplexing, I must own. The equal chances are obviously the simplest to understand. These include the six large divisions, and are thus allotted: *Manque* stands to win on any number in the first half of the columns from one to eighteen inclusive; *pair* wins on all the even numbers; *impair*, on all the odd; *passe* is the reverse of *manque*, and represents the second half of the column from nineteen to thirty-six. *Rouge* and *noir* follow, and are of course dependent upon the two colours in the roulette. So far do these sections of the table claim an advantage over all the rest, that they stand their ground even against zero for a time, which carries away every other stake instantaneously, wherever placed. When that mischievous cipher crops up, all the money upon the even chances is imprisoned between the boundary-lines, until after the result of the next *tour*, when it is recovered, or finally lost. The player, however, is not restricted to the same venture again. In the interval of imprisonment, he is allowed the option of transferring his stakes to any other situation of corresponding risk. The double odds come next in succession upon the twelves and blank spaces beneath the columns. *Douze premier* commands the first third of the numbers, *douze milieu* the second, and *douze dernier* the last. The spaces also cover twelve numbers, running longitudinally, thus varying the chances with similar odds. Up to this point, everything is intelligible enough; and it would be well for the frequenters of the casino if they kept strictly to these limited liabilities; and no doubt they would do so, if the dominant passion for excitement, and the expectations of egregious gains, did not lead them into 'playing upon the numbers themselves,' at once the most fascinating and dangerous proceeding. The hope of receiving thirty-five times the stake, induces many to select a single square, and adhere to it during the greater part of an evening, on the hypothetical principle that, sooner or later, it is sure to turn up. This somewhat Quixotic plan is called staking *en pleine*, and the 'maximum' or largest sum permitted to be staked in this manner is nine louis, three hundred louis, or two hundred and forty pounds

sterling, being the limit that the bank disburses to any one person at a time, though a dozen people may each receive the same, should they all simultaneously make the 'lucky shot.'

The diversity of risks upon the numbers affords many opportunities for the display of tact and judgment, and also temper. Those who, impatient of losing at first, rush indiscriminately from one hazard to another, almost invariably become victims to their restless impetuosity; whereas a cool cautious player always acts upon some reasonable, premeditated plan, by which he qualifies an extraordinary risk in one place by suitable precautions in another, so that the adverse odds may be reduced to a minimum.

Staking *en cheval*, is putting the money on a line between two numbers, thus covering both, with seventeen times the stakes in contemplation on either. The next ventures are called the *carré simple* and the *carré en pleine*. The former is effected by selecting the outside edges of the column directly in front of three squares; and the latter by selecting a point where the lines cross at right angles in the midst of four squares. The returns are respectively elevenfold and eightfold. Still descending in the scale of odds, we reach the transversal, whereby six squares are brought into requisition with fivefold indemnity attached. In this instance, the extremities of any intermediate transverse line is the position to be taken.

Having thus disposed of the salient features of the table, I must proceed to exemplify the stratagems most in vogue to turn them to account. A practised hand seldom commits himself to a solitary risk. If he stakes *en pleine* upon a number, say *trente-six*, he will also have recourse to *douze dernier* and *passe*, and perhaps *impair* or *rouge*, or both. By these means he elects to win with the least odds against him; and, that proposition failing, to lose comparatively little, or be quits with the table, provided any number on the second half of the columns turns up, because upon that half only he has formed his calculations. This is easily explained. If *trente-six* loses, he has *passe* to redeem the loss, with an equal chance of profiting by *rouge* and *impair*. Should *douze dernier* be fortunate, he receives double stakes, thus compensating for both the others, in the event of their succumbing; and so on *ad infinitum*.

This system applies throughout, with many modifications, all subject to the obligations of the first cast. Apart from anything like management or method, occasions arise when splendid *coups* are made by a mere fortuitous concurrence of absolute good-luck. I have watched a man sweep up nearly fifty thousand francs in a short time, without possessing the remotest knowledge of the game, and then part with every penny almost as quickly, in the same spirit of *insouciance*.

The secret of success is to know when to stop. Very few have the strength of purpose to take advantage of the moment when their luck begins to waver, and the inevitable consequences are that they perish by their weakness. Human nature will assert itself, and the propensity to covetousness proves the ruin of scores who had otherwise realised handsome emoluments.

Playing upon the three successive twelves, is a constant habit with some, throwing now and then, by way of a sop, a small amount upon zero; others restrict themselves to the irregular twelves at the feet of the columns; whilst, again, the less

adventurous never leave rouge et noir. The temptation, however, to abandon a slow process for a quick and brilliant style of play, not unfrequently entices even old stagers to forego their usual prudence, especially when the 'table seems favourable' to the larger risks—and the vicissitudes of the game are really remarkable. There are days when, from no assignable cause, the fortunes of roulette confine themselves with astonishing fidelity to certain limits of the table, or when one amongst the equal chances prevails for hours together. I have known the douze dernier occur fifteen or sixteen times without intermission, and then, after a slight check, resume its sway; and once I counted a run of over thirty upon the noir. These are the golden opportunities for the regular players, who never 'forsake a colour' until it proves recreant. The impossibility of any collusion existing amongst the croupiers to control the issue of the game obtains in the bare fact of the unbridled licence of the ball to go where it will. No device, howsoever dexterously attempted, could influence its mercurial properties; and the desultory adaptation of the numbers to the circle wherein it eventually tumbles, renders it equally a question of doubt to all parties what colour, direction, or chance of the table will be influenced by its final achievement; so that the idea of fraud cannot be entered into the catalogue of M. Blanc's proscribed iniquities.

The available capital of the roulette-table is fixed at one hundred thousand francs, or four thousand pounds English, and this is renewed as often as it becomes necessary. The 'breaking of the bank' is, accordingly, a matter of infinitely greater difficulty than is popularly imagined. The money is brought into the *salon de jeu* every morning with some ceremony. In the presence of the chief inspectors and the superintendent, it is carefully counted, weighed, and arranged—the *jetons*, or two-franc coins of the institution, and the big five-franc pieces, in long rows; the rouleaux of fifty and of twenty-five louis in pyramidal heaps (charming to witness); and the notes, all of the Bank of France, in caskets with grated brass slides on the top. The amount is divided into two equal proportions, and allotted to the charge of four croupiers, seated in opposite couples, who begin their duties about noon, just after the arrival of the mid-day steamer from Nice.

A salutary regulation holds at Monaco—but whether at other like places or not, I am ignorant—forbidding any youth, or person apparently under age, to play there. Should such a one be discovered putting money upon the table, his stake is instantly but politely returned to him, much to his chagrin and disappointment, as I have noticed more than once. The honesty of the croupiers is often very strikingly manifested. During my first visit to Monaco last season, I was called out of the room by a friend, whom I had promised to accompany back to Nice over the Turbie. Our horses were ready, and we started. I had been playing with napoleons, and, quite unwittingly, had left one upon zero. The incident was noticed by a croupier, and several days later, on returning and entering the salon, I was agreeably astonished by having thirty-five louis immediately handed to me. I had 'scarcely quitted the table,' he assured me, 'when zero turned up.' My friend capped my story afterwards with a still more refreshing proof of their integrity; whilst a less credulous being present (who was a large loser at Monaco) declared

emphatically that it was all moonshine—a neat hoodwink for the greenhorns.

Monaco has as yet a scanty, if any, record of the deplorable and hideous crimes that have so repeatedly reddened the surrounding soil of the notorious continental 'hells.' What may be its history hereafter, when it shall have become possibly the only acknowledged place of its kind, I am not prepared to anticipate. So long as there are incorrigible gamblers in the world, it matters little in the end where they indulge their passion, whether at the clubs in London and Paris, upon the race-course, or in the midst of an endless summer on the banks of the Mediterranean. The sequel can differ little in any case.

## BLONDEL PARVA.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.—QUITS WITH SIR RICHARD.

So soon as counsel's opinion had been taken upon the will which Maurice Glyn had so singularly become possessed of, he determined to seek a personal interview with Sir Richard Anstey. There was scarcely a doubt but that Kate Irby could dispossess him of all he had, and even exact restitution of what he had spent, since he had come into his late uncle's estate; but this could only be done by trial in open court, where all the circumstances connected with Robert Irby's fraud would certainly be disclosed. It was necessary, therefore, to effect some sort of compromise. Maurice well knew that Kate would make no claim at the risk of exposure; but he built his hope of getting good terms upon the fact, that the letter which he had written to Sir Richard, after Irby's death, had borne good fruit; that the hint therein conveyed of his knowledge of the destruction of the will had stopped all further persecution on the baronet's part, and probably sealed his lips for ever.

On a certain morning, Maurice presented himself at Sir Richard's door in Eaton Place, and without even being asked his name, was at once admitted. He had expected some difficulty here; that if his card was taken in, the baronet would probably refuse to see him, and he was agreeably surprised to find this obstacle surmounted; but the fact was, Sir Richard, whose taste had always lain that way, had, now that he could afford it, become deeply connected with the turf; he not only betted heavily, but himself ran horses, and he was in the habit of receiving persons of all descriptions, 'with the latest intelligence,' and his servant was therefore not so inquisitorial, as is usual in Eaton Place, with respect to visitors' names. 'A gentleman to see you, Sir Richard,' was all he said, as he ushered Maurice into his master's reception-room, and then closed the door discreetly, without the slightest idea that he had introduced a game-cock with spurs to a game-cock without them.

'What do you want? Why do you come here?' asked Sir Richard, starting angrily from his chair as soon as he recognised his visitor: the look of Maurice Glyn always robbed him of his habitual self-control—tore away the sheep-skin, as it were, from his wolf's hide.

'Have patience, and you shall hear, sir,' returned Maurice.

'I do not wish to hear—I will have nothing to do with you; and he laid his hand upon the bell. If he had rung it, and turned his visitor out, the latter (hampered by Kate's fears) would have been puzzled how to act; but he did not ring it; he

stood irresolute—even apprehensive, as Maurice thought.

'Just as you please, Sir Richard; but if you will not listen—if you compel me to tell my tale to others, it will be the worse for you—your ruin be on your own head.'

'Ruin, pshaw! what big words are these? You think I was frightened by your letter, I suppose, with its absurd accusation; whereas, since this Irby was dead, I simply abstained from making a public scandal upon his daughter's account. But I am not going to be bullied. You are a lawyer, and should know that even the writing of a threatening letter—quite apart from the truth of its assertions—is a most serious offence.'

'When you are quite calm, I will tell you what I am come about.'

Sir Richard sat down, and folding his hands upon his knee, regarded his visitor with a contemptuous smile; but the foot that was upon the carpet shifted uneasily.

'You are aware, I suppose, that your uncle, Sir Nicholas, once made a will, by which he bequeathed more than half his great estate to his godchild, Kate Irby, and but five hundred pounds to yourself?'

'Well.'

'Afterwards, however, he made another, reversing this disposition of his property, and leaving you his heir, and Miss Irby only a legatee. Now, one of these wills has been destroyed.'

'Both!' ejaculated Sir Richard vehemently—'that is,' added he, correcting himself, 'I suppose they have, since the second has never been found.'

'That would have been a dangerous admission of yours, Sir Richard, had a witness been present,' observed Maurice drily; 'as it is, however, we can talk together without reserve. I know perfectly well what came of the second will. You burned it, in the Blue Parlour of Anstey Court, while your uncle lay dead on the bed. Robert Irby saw you do it.'

'He was a liar,' returned Richard in a hoarse, low voice, and looking suspiciously towards the door, 'and a felon!'

'Yes; and what is still more to the purpose, he is dead,' said Maurice coolly. 'However, both you and Irby are agreed in this, that the second will is not in existence. Now the first is, and I've got it.'

'You lie!' cried Sir Richard savagely. 'If you have any such thing, you forged it. The first will was torn to pieces by my uncle before Irby's face.'

'Did you see it done? Did anybody—even a felon—see it done? There is nobody who can be more aware of the value of personal testimony than yourself, Sir Richard. Have you any such to prove this?'

'I am perfectly sure—I will take my Bible oath,' cried the baronet excitedly, 'that that will was destroyed, as I have stated.'

'Just so—that is, to the best of your belief. I believe you are perfectly honest for once in that avowal. But what rather damages its truth is, that my lawyer has this very identical will in his possession at this moment; and one of the witnesses to it has sworn to his own handwriting. I have got an attested copy of the document in my pocket, and of course you can peruse the original, which, however, I thought it more prudent not to bring with me. Some people have a habit of burning wills.'

'If what you say be true,' observed Richard, without noticing this last remark, which perhaps he did not hear (for, while perusing the parchment,

he had suddenly grown very pale and thoughtful), 'this felon Irby, in addition to his other crimes, must have given up some duplicate of this will into my uncle's hands, and fraudulently kept back the original for his own purposes.'

'Between ourselves, Sir Richard, and in the absence of witnesses,' observed Maurice coolly, 'I don't mind telling you that that is also my opinion.'

'I am quite sure that my cousin Kate would never take advantage of a fraud,' said Richard, drawing a long breath.

'He is certainly the greatest scoundrel I ever met in my life,' ejaculated Maurice. 'There is nobody comes near him for villainy. Look here, you dog!' exclaimed he suddenly; 'the case stands thus. This scheme of Irby's would have availed nothing, but for your own crime. Do you prate of fraud, who burn dead men's wills before their limbs are cold! You have overreached yourself, disinherited yourself—have only yourself (and your foul greed) to thank for total ruin. Whatever you may henceforth possess will be doled out to you—and by me, by me, you scoundrel—in the way of charity, not right. You owe already more than you can pay. The five hundred pounds, which alone is justly yours, has already five times over been paid out of the estate: you spent as much in chartering that steamer at Liverpool, you vengeful hound. As for Kate Irby (whose name your lips pollute whenever you frame it), she shall never know, be sure, what you and I suspect about this will. She would not believe it, if you told her; no human being would believe it on your evidence, and she least of all. You are hoist with your own petard every way. Do you see—you fool and rogue in one—that we have you in a vice? If I had my way, Richard Anstey, I would turn the screw, and squeeze you finely: you might hollow your loudest.'

'All England shall ring with her father's shame,' exclaimed Richard through his set teeth.

'That will be your revenge, of course; we expected as much. It is to prevent that—though contrary to my advice (I would give you nothing)—that it is proposed to throw you a bone with a little flesh upon it. You will be forgiven the mesne profits, every shilling of which could be recovered from you; and your cousin will allow you a thousand pounds a year out of the estate. Come; I told you down at Liverpool that when the hour of retribution came, I would not be merciless, in consideration of your being so perfect a model of rascality. During this interview, you have even exceeded my expectations in that way; and I will use my influence with your cousin to make your allowance guineas instead of pounds. Do you accept these conditions or not?'

'What choice have I?' snarled Sir Richard, like a dog that has a mind to fly at his master's throat, yet dares not.

'You can go to law, and publish your cousin's shame. You will lose your case, and thenceforward be a beggar; but you will have your revenge. You have to consider whether that is worth such a price. You are like one of those venomous things which can only sting once, and then are dead. Will you throw yourself upon your cousin's mercy—through me? You are neither to write to her, nor speak with her, mind that. Will you do this or not? come; decide.'

'When I have satisfied myself of the existence of this will, I will do it.'



'You are wise, Richard Anstey. On this card is my lawyer's address.'

'Does he know?' inquired the baronet darkly.

'Of your crime? No. It is not everybody who desires to shame their own flesh and blood. He only knows that Kate Irby is your uncle's heiress. You have but to tell him that since this will has been discovered, you gladly accept the terms that have been offered you by me, her agent. They are lenient ones,' added Maurice, as he rose and took up his hat, 'far better than you deserve; and you know it.'

A ghastly smile flitted over Sir Richard's face.

'I understand,' said he.

Maurice nodded curtly, and left the baronet to his meditations.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—MADAM KISSES HIM.

Winter trod close that year upon the heels of Autumn, and by the time Maurice Glyn had settled his various affairs in town, the first snow had fallen. The train that carried him down to Blondel Parva sped through a white world. But the snow-clouds having emptied their contents, the atmosphere was green and clear, the keen air inspiring, the sunshine bright and glorious. Old Mr Watson, whom Maurice had easily retained in town by a promise to pay all charges at the *Runnin' 'Orse*, with two guineas a day for loss of time (for Maurice was jealous above all things that the good news should be brought to Blondel by none but himself), did indeed complain of the cold; but to his companion nothing seemed amiss. Who that has borne happy tidings to his beloved ones, has not experienced this? Even sleet and darkness are not unwelcome to the traveller who rides through them at the gallop towards the hearth which his heart yearns to cheer. The moaning of the winter sea was dear to Maurice, because it told him he was nearing home; for is not that our home where abide those we love? The wind that swept the wave brought with its odour brightest memories. The level, treeless flats refreshed his eye more than the fairest landscape. It seems to the repining human heart that one has not many such journeys. Remembrance—the ingrate—clings rather to the hasty summons to the sick-bed, or the travel across strange lands, every foot of which removes us further from those with whom we fain would stay. But most of us have had experience of some white day of travel—every boy who returns from school for his first holidays has one—when all great nature's forces seem resolved to work us pleasure; and thus it was to-day with Maurice Glyn. The yellow fly—its unlovely hue much aggravated by the surrounding snow—seemed a sheriff's coach of splendour; that dreary uphill road the most picturesque of by-ways—only a little long. At the turning, Maurice left his invalid companion to be carried home, and took his way to the manor-house on foot. He sang, he whistled; like Mercury, he seemed to have wings about his ankles, and was inclined to fly rather than walk. He had written about all else to Kate, save the finding of the will: it was only yesterday that matters (subject, of course, to her approval) had been finally arranged with Sir Richard; that was the good news he had to tell her. There was no occasion for her to sell her translations, and there would be no difficulty in her purchasing a sewing-machine—or seven shopfuls of them, if such was her pleasure. The carpet-bag he carried in his hand

almost without knowing it (except when he threw it up into the air and caught it deftly), was full of certain documents, which would convince the most sceptical. But she would believe his word. O yes. Her trust was fixed most firmly in her professional adviser. At which idea, Maurice laughed aloud.

Madam and Kate were in the breakfast-parlour, which they used in cold weather in preference to the large drawing-room. The old lady welcomed him with both hands; Kate with one.

'Well, I never!' exclaimed Madam, scandalised by this coldness of demeanour. 'Why don't you give him a kiss?'

Blushing scarlet, Kate presented her cheek at this reproach, and Maurice touched it with his lips.

'That was not the way your poor father used to greet me, when we were engaged to be married, and had been away from one another a whole month,' observed Mrs Irby. 'I call it very unsatisfactory.'

'Shall I do it again?' inquired Maurice demurely.

'Not for my sake, Mr Glyn, certainly not,' answered the old lady, laughing. 'Well, a laggard lover makes, I daresay, an all the better man of business.—Poor Mr Crozley is almost out of his mind with what he calls my rashness. Now, what have you done with all my money, sir?'

'I have invested it in the manner I suggested, my dear Madam. I will answer for it, your income will be henceforth, at least, double what it used to be.'

'Goodness me! Is it possible?—Not that I see why you should shew such a long face about it, Kate. I am sure we ought to feel very much obliged to Mr Glyn, and I am sure there is no great risk, or he would not have run it.'

'There is no risk at all,' said Maurice quietly. 'But in return for that excellent arrangement, dear Mrs Irby, I must ask for a few minutes alone with Kate here.'

She was growing very pale, and he saw that she had the greatest difficulty to maintain her calmness.

'Be of good courage, dear girl,' whispered he, taking his seat beside her, as her mother left the room: 'I am not unnecessarily cruel, as you think. Your mother's money is quite safe. There is neither shame nor poverty before you now. I bring the best of news: what I hoped for, when last I parted from you, has come to pass.'

'Neither shame nor poverty?' murmured Kate faintly, like one in a dream. 'My mother's money safe? Have you not, then, settled with the insurance companies?'

'Yes, Kate, yes. Here is the deed of acquittance: see, they promise to molest us no further.'

'For the consideration of ten thousand pounds? What does this mean, Maurice? Ten thousand; why, we have only five! You have advanced the other five yourself. You have begged yourself for us.' She rose from the couch trembling excessively. 'I will not have it done.'

'It is done, dear Kate. But then I knew you would pay me back again, you see. That was the point I was coming to. You are a rich woman—a will has been found—you are your godfather's—Sir Nicholas's heiress, after all.'

And he told her his good news—without a word to mar it, of her cousin's crime, her father's cunning stratagem.

'Why, Maurice, I can pay the whole sum now

which we wrongfully acquired: ten thousand pounds would now repay the companies for all their loss—wipe out the blot upon my father's memory!

'Without doubt it would. Pay it; and if they do not cast a statue of you in pure gold, and set it up in their board-rooms, they are a niggardly lot.'

'I can repay them, Mr Glyn—and I thank Heaven for it—but how can I repay you?'

'Easily: you will have lots of money to spare still.'

'O, sir, I was not thinking of mere money. That five thousand pounds of yours was not advanced with the idea of repayment. Before you learned of the existence of this will, you had made this arrangement with the companies, although you are now striving to hide your goodness.'

'Still, I suppose you *will* repay me,' chuckled Maurice: 'you are not going to ride off upon the shabby ground, that I did not expect it, and therefore it don't matter. Then you must replace your mother's money; or stay, it will be better fun to give her ten per cent. for it, so that she will not lose her confidence in your humble servant. And besides that, I'm going to ask for some more for somebody else (I take advantage, you see, of my heiress while she is overwhelmed by her good-fortune, and ready to give everything to everybody): I want you to buy the advowson of Blondel Parva, and to present it to Mr Milton when the time comes.'

'By all means, dear Mr Glyn. But you have asked nothing for yourself—you to whom I am indebted for all.'

'Money can never repay me,' observed Maurice with affected gloom.

'Alas, no!' sighed Kate; 'indeed, it cannot.'

'And yet, if I had it *all*,' mused he comically, 'subject to these little deductions, then I think I should be satisfied. Won't you give it me *all*, dear Kate, and yourself into the bargain?'

'Mr Glyn—Maurice,' sobbed the girl hysterically, 'you know that cannot be. You promised never to think of such a thing again. It was settled so between us.'

'Excuse me, my dear Kate; I happen to remember the very words of the agreement, and the words, I do assure you, upon my professional reputation, are everything. You said that you would never taint my name by sharing it, and I answered that you never should—because (this was a mental reservation of my own) you never *could*. There is no real shame without blame. Moreover, when I parted from you on that occasion, I remarked: "Well, at all events" (that was when you wouldn't kiss me), "you will not grudge me your hand:" and you did not; you gave it to me, and I've got it now, and I *mean* to keep it.' And he gave that little hand a loving squeeze. 'Your glove, dear Kate, I return to you, having done my duty, I trust, as your true knight: he who has the substance does not value the shadow.—Don't speak, darling, if it distresses you, I beg. The silence which gives consent is golden; and everything is very nice as it is.'

'Well, upon my word!' ejaculated Madam, who, after repeated but unnoticed knockings at the door, had ventured to intrude herself, 'I am sure I blamed you for your reserve just now, Mr Maurice Glyn, with great injustice; or rather, you seem to me to be making up for previous omissions.'

'Yes, my dear Madam, that is so,' returned Maurice coolly. 'There were considerable back-payments owing; the principal had to be repaid with compound interest. I am an authority upon all these matters, you know, in spite of what Mr Crozley says.'

'At all events, Kate seems to submit to it with a very good grace, Maurice.' (This was the first time Madam had called him Maurice; she was punctilious, after her fashion, about that sort of familiarity.)—'My darling' (this to her daughter, with a tenderness that is not to be expressed by words), 'are you happy?'

'Yes, mamma,' answered Kate, smiling brightly through her tears.

'That is the best news I have had for many a day; for Kate,' said Madam gravely, 'has not been happy, sir, this long time. Young people that love one another should not be so much kept apart.'

'My sentiments exactly, my dear Madam,' returned Maurice ecstatically. 'But stay; you are not yet aware that, in welcoming so humble a son-in-law, you are throwing away upon him a great heiress—a young woman that might have done a great deal better than connect herself with Grub Street. A party—yes, a party worth eight thousand a year.'

'It's quite true, mamma,' said Kate quietly, as her mother looked in perplexity from one to the other. 'Sir Nicholas's first will has been found, and I am his heiress.'

'And your cousin Richard declared to me that his uncle tore it up before your father's eyes!' exclaimed the old lady. 'But then, I do believe that that young man would say anything.'

'Ay, and swear to it,' added Maurice hastily. 'Be sure that you never believe him even on his oath.'

'Dear, dear,' exclaimed the old lady, fanning herself with her plump hand, 'I'm quite in a flutter! Please to tell me all about it, children, word for word.'

So Maurice told her, not indeed 'word for word,' but so much as was good for her to know, of all that had happened.

'If my daughter had eighty thousand a year instead of eight, I had still rather she married you than any man in the world, Maurice Glyn,' was her remark when he had concluded. And, moreover, she kissed him.

#### THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

WITH unseen movement grows the lily's stem,

The forest lily, cared of Day and Night,

Until the light bells bend it, each a gem

In large leaf sheltered, fragrant, ivory-white;

There decks with others, softly thronged, a scene

Of boughs and golden lights that glow and wane;

And then a child bursts through the branches green,

And dancing, bears it down the winding lane.

On the first Saturday in September will be published the beginning of a new Novel, entitled

#### FOUND DEAD,

By the Author of 'BLONDEL PARVA.'

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